

To: Wall, Dan[wall.dan@epa.gov]
Cc: Peterson, Cynthia[Peterson.Cynthia@epa.gov]; Fagen, Elizabeth[Fagen.Elizabeth@epa.gov]
From: Schmittiel, Paula
Sent: Tue 2/3/2015 7:50:04 PM
Subject: RE: Durango Herald - questions

Thanks Dan – Well stated and concise.

Paula Schmittiel

Remedial Project Manager

U.S. Environmental Protection Agency

1595 Wynkoop St.

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From: Wall, Dan
Sent: Tuesday, February 03, 2015 12:45 PM
To: Schmittiel, Paula
Cc: Peterson, Cynthia
Subject: RE: Durango Herald - questions

See below for some things we have seen. I guess this is new data or maybe some new eyes looking at older data.

From: Schmittiel, Paula
Sent: Tuesday, February 03, 2015 8:51 AM
To: Wall, Dan
Subject: FW: Durango Herald - questions

If you have time to shoot me a few points/thoughts on her Qs that would be great. I'll try and pull something together before 2:00 pm today. Thanks.

Paula Schmittiel

Remedial Project Manager

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From: Peterson, Cynthia

Sent: Tuesday, February 03, 2015 7:27 AM

To: Sisk, Richard; Schmittiel, Paula; Fagen, Elizabeth

Cc: Faulk, Libby; Mylott, Richard

Subject: FW: Durango Herald - questions

Hi, Richard and Paula.

I spoke with Chase McAlister from the Durango Herald briefly yesterday afternoon. She had some questions that I felt would be better answered by the two of you. I asked that she email them to me so that I could get them to the right folks. Could you take a look below and get your answers back to me by 3:30 this afternoon. I will send them to her along with some additional information I'd like to give her regarding a couple of questions I answered yesterday.

Please let me know if you have any questions or would like more information.

Thanks!

Cynthia

Cynthia Peterson

Community Involvement Coordinator

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303-312-6879 -- direct dial

From: Chase Olivarius-McAllister [<mailto:cbomcallister@gmail.com>]

Sent: Monday, February 02, 2015 4:43 PM

To: Peterson, Cynthia

Subject: Durango Herald - questions

Dear Cynthia,

Thank you so much for taking the time to speak with me on the phone.

At the most recent meeting of the Animas River Stakeholders Group, Paula Schmidil said:

"I think one thing you can look at is the [OPEC] model that was presented last September. That demonstrates that not all the contamination is coming from Cement Creek. So addressing - just focusing on Cement Creek - may not get us to where everybody would like to be an improvement in Animas River water quality."

Over the course of the last two years, in previous interviews, EPA officials and scientists have always said that Cement Creek is the crux of problem in the Animas River.

Cement Creek is an important and probably most significant source of metal loading to the Animas River. As demonstrated by OTEC and presented to the community of Silverton, ARSG and La Plata county commissioners, upstream loading of metals such as cadmium during Fall low flow conditions exceed 25% of the metal load reporting to station A72 (about 1 mile below Silverton). Similarly, aluminum loading from Mineral Creek is about 45% of the total Aluminum reporting to A72.

Additionally, EPA sampling results from 2009-2012, which are consistent with previous results from USGS, indicate that concentrations of cadmium and zinc in the Animas River prior to runoff, reach levels that significantly impair aquatic life above Cement Creek.

These results were presented at the April 2014 ARSG meeting and are on the ARSG website (<http://www.animasriverstakeholdersgroup.org/attachments/File/EPA%20Assessment%20Status%20and%20Re>)
The significance of metal concentrations in the Animas River above Cement Creek were also presented and discussed in the February 2013 Screening Level Ecological Risk Assessment.

Is there new data to suggest that it isn't? Why is the EPA seemingly changing its interpretation of what's causing the environmental damage to the Upper Animas River?

Sources close to the ARSG have characterized Schmidil's statement as a "departure" for the EPA, and some say the EPA's seemingly new stance is more congenial to Sunnyside's insistence that it is not liable for metal loading in the Upper Animas.

What is the EPA's opinion of Sunnyside's liability?

I'm on deadline. Please get back to me this evening or latest tomorrow morning. If you feel uncomfortable commenting on certain questions, feel free to simply respond that you do not feel comfortable commenting.

Yours,
Chase

--

Chase Olivarius-McAllister
Durango Herald

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